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THE

CARIB CHIEF:

A TRAGEDY

IN FIVE ACTS.

BY

HORACE TWISS, Esq.

Second Edition.

LONDON:

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TO THE

EARL OF CLARENDON.

My Lord,

If that high reputation for literary taste, which Your Lordship has sought in vain to conceal among the shades of Your retreat, had been the only argument for presenting this drama to Your notice, I might have yielded to a dangerous vanity, in soliciting the attention of so accomplished a judge. But it has been my good fortune to know how kindly Your Lordship ever grants, to the deficiencies of others, that indulgence, of which You can so little need the return; and with

such an encouragement, I am unable to resist the proud gratification of thus recording, that among the many other proofs of regard, with which I have been honoured by Your Lordship, I have now been thought worthy of the permission to subscribe myself,

My Lord,

Your Lordship's most obliged

and obedient servant,

HORACE TWISS.

London, May 15, 1819.

PROLOGUE,

BY THE AUTHOR OF THE TRAGEDY:

SPOKEN BY

Mr. H. KEMBLE.

[The lines marked by inverted commas are omitted in the recitation.]

When the rude Masters of the early time
Pursu'd young nature in her yielding prime,
" Threw up her maiden veil, and with blest arms
" Rifled the wild abundance of her charms,"
Then was each brightest, most expressive grace,
And loftiest feature of her varying face,
Painted from life, in many a breathing line,
Warm as herself, and like herself, divine.

" The bards that follow'd, found their choice forestall'd,
" And dealt out copies, classically bald,
" Till, at third hand, poor nature was become
" A flat, evap'rate *caput mortuum*.
" Then, mad for novelty, inventors drew
" Things novel, both in art and nature too;
" Persons not human, passions that might seem
" The over-wrought convulsions of a dream;
" Left-handed plots, that mov'd but by the start,
" And griefs, that reach'd, but to revolt the heart.

Those days are past. If now the means remain
To wake the Drama into life again,
Where shall we seek them? Not in monstrous woes,
The ultra tragedy of spasms and throes;
Nor in faint copies from our father's drafts,

Barren as cuttings of exhausted grafts,—
But in a fresh adventure to explore
Nature's own fields, if haply they of yore
Have, in their forage of that fair demesne,
Left some ungather'd fruit for us to glean.

Such is our hope to-night. Our simple plot
Chooses an unreclaim'd and distant spot:
For since the arbiters of taste expect
All to be new, yet all to be correct,
No course was left us, but to guide the helm,
To some remote, but not unfruitful realm—
Where no preceding bard had touch'd, to claim
Possession in his Sov'reign Muse's name.

Yet may these sketches of uncultur'd life,
Its fiery appetite and stormy strife,
Avail to warn, how passions unrepress
Usurp, corrode, and desolate the breast;
Drag us unsatisfied, through lengthen'd years
Of impotent desires and carking fears;
Or bring at last fruition's fatal joy,
Like Jove's embrace, in lightnings that destroy!

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

OMREAH, the Carib Prince of the southern district of Dominica	*Mr. Kean.*
MALOCH, a native Prince of the northern district of Dominica	*Mr. Holland.*
CARBAL, the Chief Priest of Maloch	*Mr. D. Fisher.*
LOGAMAH, Carbal's Brother - - -	*Mr. Hamblin.*
BRANCHO, a Priest, follower of Omreah - - - - - - - -	*Mr. Ley.*
TREFUSIS, an English General -	*Mr. H. Kemble.*
MONTALBERT, Commander of the French Garrisons in Dominica and Guadaloupe - - - -	*Mr. Bengough.*
COLMAR, Lieutenant to Montalbert	*Mr. R. Phillips.*
D'ARCY, an Officer of Montalbert's Garrison - - - - - - - -	*Mr. Yarnold.*
CLAUDINA, Montalbert's Bride, of Indian origin - - - - -	*Mrs. W. West.*
KATHELRADE, an Indian Woman, Foster-mother of Montalbert	*Miss Boyce.*
MARIAN, Claudina's Friend, Daughter of Colmar - - -	*Miss Cooke.*

English and French Soldiers. Attendants, male and female. Carib Priests and Warriors.

Scene, the Island of Dominica: Time, the beginning of the Reign of Elizabeth.

[*The Author cannot allow this Play to be hurried through the press, without offering his tribute of admiration to those splendid exertions of Mr. KEAN, by which its unprecedented success has been atchieved. The interest has been much assisted by the tenderness and delicacy of Mrs. West; and while Miss Boyce, Mr. H. Kemble, Mr. D. Fisher, Mr. Holland, Mr. Bengough, and Mr. Hamblin, in the other principal characters, have so materially contributed their valuable aid, the Performers at large have, by their diligence and propriety, completed the general effect of the representation*]

THE

CARIB CHIEF.

ACT I.

SCENE I.

A Subterraneous Cavern.

TREFUSIS *rises from a rude seat, and comes forward.*

Tre. DAYS, months, and seasons creep away—and still
A dungeon cave in Dominica thus
Shuts me from light, and love!—And thou, Claudina,
Dost thou still mourn thy lost, thy vanquish'd soldier?
Or art thou, in this lapse of hopeless years,
Wearied at last of thinking upon him
Who cannot cease to think and doat on thee!

TREFUSIS *turns up the stage.* CARBAL *enters through a wicket gate, which he unlocks.*

Carb. What hoa! Trefusis!

Tre. Carbal! come again
To bring the unwelcome sustenance that prolongs
This wretched life of mine?
Carb. I come to bring
What makes life worth the wishing—liberty!
Tre. Mock not your prisoner, Carbal; you were wont
To seem my friend.
Carb. And by my deeds will prove
That friendship true. If I have risen above
My rugged nature, turned the ancient priesthood
Which I inherit, to the means of blessing
My untaught brethren, and obtained the trust
And countenance of our king, 'tis your instruction,
Daily bestow'd upon me through your long
And hard captivity, that has advanced
And blest my fortune. You are free, Trefusis.
Tre. My freedom, and my past imprisonment,
Are equal mysteries.
Carb. Mysteries now no more.
When, sixteen years ago, Montalbert first
Usurp'd for France our hapless Dominica,
Two chiefs possess'd its rule. Maloch, our prince,
By tribute of some threescore slaves to France,
Preserved this northern kingdom: while Omreah,
The southern chief, resisting, was o'erthrown,
And sold to bondage. Peace remain'd, till you,
Two summers since, with England's power, assail'd
The French possessions here.
Tre. Pass all the rest,
And tell me why, on waking from the shock

Which in the battle stunn'd and laid me low,
I found myself a prisoner?
Carb. When the fight
Was over, and the evening breeze sprang up,
Maloch, our king, went forth with me to search
For one of his fall'n kindred. Finding you
Stunn'd as one dead, he bade me bear you hither,
And fan the spark of life; that in his hands
The person of so famed an officer
Might be a boon for England or for France,
As best should suit his interests. He at last
Resolved to treat with France: to tell Montalbert
The secret of your preservation here,
And yield your fate to his disposal.
Tre. How!
Is it Montalbert's will that has assign'd me
This living burial? Though our public duty
Ranged us in adverse arms, I yet had hoped
Our private friendship might survive.
Carb. But friendship
Gives way to love. You were betroth'd, I think,
To that soft, dark-eyed maid, whom in her childhood
Montalbert rescued from a ruffian's grasp—
His young Claudina——
Tre. Speak!—my heart grows faint.
Carb. Montalbert, as it seems, had loved her long:
But while he thought you living, had repress'd
His inly burning passion. When you fell
In battle, he, persuaded of your death,
Reveal'd his love. The news of your revival
Came like a blight upon him; and he charged us
On peril of our lives to keep the secret,

And guard you buried in this unknown cell.
Thus had two years gone by.
Tre. And has Claudina?——
Carb. For those two years, she liv'd but to lament
Her slain Trefusis. Time and gratitude
At last, though coldly, won Montalbert's suit:
And only twelve days since, at Guadaloupe,
They were united.
Tre. Why, farewell then, hope,
Life, liberty, farewell!
Carb. Life—liberty——
Are precious now, for they will give you vengeance.
I long had wish'd to set you free, and profit
By your experience in the arts of war,
For shaking off the yoke of France; but Maloch,
Our king, restrain'd my will. At length, Omreah,
The chieftain of the south, enlarged from bondage,
Lands on the isle, excites our Carib warriors,
And conquers back our southern Dominica:
While, on the neighbouring coast of Guadaloupe,
Montalbert's nuptial joys have been disturb'd
By a strong force of English, which your queen,
The bold Elizabeth, has arm'd from Britain.
Tre. Justice approaches then!
Carb. I urged our king
To seize the occasion, and throw off the power
Of tyrant France. Omreah's fortune warm'd
His cautious spirit; but th' appalling strength
Of the French fortress on this isle, was still
A check to our revolt.
Tre. And must be ever,

Until some good ally shall bring you store
Of stout artillery.
Carb. That have I provided
From England's officers at Guadaloupe.
Tre. Who is our general there?
Carb. Fitzjohn, your comrade;
The tidings of your safety gladden'd him:
And he has promis'd, if to-day shall crown
The English victory in Guadaloupe,
He will, this night, dispatch the aids we need
To storm the fortress here; of which adventure
He gives command to you.
Tre. Could aught revive
A heart, benumb'd by such despair as mine,
This call to vengeance might awake its pulse,
And nerve it into act! —
Carb. Screen'd by the darkness,
The English troops will land, and lie conceal'd
By the North Headland, till you send a guide
To march them tow'rd the fort. And to prevent
Ambush, or other stratagem by France,
Fitzjohn requests the guide, you shall commission,
May bear this ring, in token that he comes
At your command.
Tre. I shall observe his caution:—
But one word more for my distracted heart,
Then I am all my country's. In the siege
Of Guadaloupe, how has Claudina fared?
Carb. Safely and well. It is Montalbert's purpose,
For more security, to send her hither:
Perhaps himself to share her flight and refuge

Tre. Shall I then breathe again the air that fans her?
See her perchance within the crumbling towers
Of her false lord, and save her in the assault?
Carb. Trust me, whatever else our warriors dare,
Claudina shall be sacred. But 'tis time
We speed to Maloch's tent.
Tre. Joy has withdrawn
Her sunshine; but the hope of vengeance, like
The swarthy glow of the swoll'n thundercloud,
Yet casts a lustre on the darken'd sky,
And lights the road to death!—
Carb. Away! away! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

The North Headland, overlooking the sea; a watch-tower at the back of the stage.

Enter MARIAN, *meeting* CLAUDINA, *and* COLMAR.

Mar. Welcome, dear father, and my much-lov'd friend:
Comes not my lord with you?
Clau. Montalbert's here,
Conferring with his soldiers.

Enter MONTALBERT.

Mont. My Claudina!
This isle, where I had hoped a shelter for you,

Is scarce more safe than that we've left. Omreah,
The untam'd prince o' the south, whom I o'ercame,
And sold to slavery, having burst his chains,
Has rais'd the standard of revolt, and seeks
A vengeance just, though late, for that black hour,
Wherein his wife, child, kin, and all his house,
I grieve to tell, were savagely cut off,
By our marauding troops.

Clau. Blest had I been,
If, with so many of the wretched stock
From whom I sprang, I had in infancy
Partaken that destruction!

Mont. Say not so:
The preservation of your life is all
That brightens that dark history. I see you,
Imploring with your little hands, the wretch
Who grasp'd your throat, as he prepar'd to slay you
For those fair gems—the very chain that now
Adorns your polish'd neck.

Clau. I wear it ever,
In hopes, that it may one day prove a clue
To trace my birth. For my sake, dear my lord,
Have mercy on my untaught countrymen;
And spare the further shedding of that blood,
Whence your Claudina springs!

Mont. It must be shed,
If we would spare our own. Omreah's sallies
Have sorely gall'd our troops: in vain, rewards
Are offer'd for his life: fear spreads his fame;
Heaven seconds him; and ev'n our garrison,
Disheartened by our fall at Guadaloupe,
Quake at his progress.

Clau. Thrice unhappy daughter
Of an unhappy race!—Where'er I fly,
Misfortune travels with me!
Mont. We shall yet
Outstrip her malice. Colmar, to the fort,
And let that native priest, that glozing Carbal,
Who was observed at Guadaloupe conveying
Dispatches and provision to the English,
Be led to-morrow, by the break of day,
To execution.
Clau. Not to-morrow! Let not
Death mark our coming. Think, too, of his mother,
Your Indian nurse, your faithful Kathelrade,
Whose heart will break to lose him.
Mont. For your sake,
For Kathelrade's, I would most gladly spare him;
But Dominica is at stake: the traitor
Would lose us all; and at a time like this,
A soldier's justice must be exemplary.
See it performed!— [*Exit* COLMAR.
When sunset cools the air,
You too, my love, shall forward to the fort,
Whither, when I have duly arm'd this point
Against surprise from England, I will follow.
[*Exit* MONTALBERT.
Mar. I hoped to see your bridal visit paid
With happier omen.
Clau. It has one relief,
That I can here embrace my childhood's friend,
And open all my aching heart to Marian:
For these afflictions, with the earlier griefs
Whose cureless pain has wrung my soul so long,
Are wasting me to death.

Mar. The earlier griefs ?
Have not these nuptial rites, the lapse of time,
Nor the fresh tumult of this English war,
Worn out their memory ?
Clau. These have but increased
My bosom's strife. How may Montalbert's bride
Dwell without guilt on the too constant love
She bore another ? Yet, how chase the thought
Of him, whose image, and fond memory
This fatal shore so bitterly renews,
My slaughtered, brave Trefusis ? Here he fell,
In the attempt against an adversary
Whom I have wedded—who, till war broke forth
'Twixt France and England, had himself design'd
Trefusis for my husband.
Mar. Time, Claudina,
And your Montalbert's lasting tenderness,
Will soften these regrets.
Clau. Heaven knows how truly
I feel Montalbert's goodness. He preserved
My infant life : supplied the place of parents,
Whom haply that wide massacre destroyed ;
But, oh ! it was Trefusis that alone
Possess'd my love : the few short happy hours
An orphan girl could know, were made by him,
With him were lost for ever.
Mar. We will speak
No further, till refreshment and repose
Have cool'd your fever'd pulse. With them return
The breathing influence of cheerfulness,
And health-restoring hope.
Claud. Oh, Marian, never,

Never again for me. Hope's genial dews,
So freshly scatter'd at the dawn of youth,
Still vanish from us as the burning day
Grows fierce; and we are left at sultry noon,
Parching and faint, upon the wastes of life!
[*Exeunt into the Watch Tower.*

SCENE III.

Wild Scenery, with a Mountain Bridge.

Enter BRANCHO, *and* LOGAMAH, *meeting.*

Bra. Who comes? Logamah?
Log. Aye! with welcome tidings
For prince Omreah.
Bra. He advances hither
With speed, but yet with caution: for the French,
Stung by our victories, have proclaim'd Omreah
An outlaw, and a rebel: and rewards
Are offer'd for his head. At every turn
We apprehend an ambush.
[*Wild music at a distance.*
Log. Hark!—the music
Of his approaching march swells on the wind—
His warriors cross the bridge, and in their van
The prince himself. [*Wild music nearer.*
[*The Caribs cross the bridge, under the command of* OMREAH.
Omr. Halt there, below the crag!—

Prepare your arms, and be in readiness
To march again upon the instant.

[OMREAH *re-crosses the bridge, and disappears behind the rocks, descending toward the glen where* BRANCHO *and* LOGAMAH *are conversing; they are supposed to see him as he descends. The report of two musquets is heard.*]

Bra. See!——
What murd'rous spies are those?—two Frenchmen, lured
By the proclaim'd reward.—Oh, save him! save him!

[BRANCHO *rushes toward the spot where* OMREAH *is supposed to be attacked, and begins to climb the rocks. The clashing of swords is heard.*]

Log. He turns!—they strike!—he fights!—he warms!—he rages!
The foremost is disarmed—Omreah grasps
And hurls him down the gulph!——

Bra. (stopping in his ascent.) His fellow flies,
And leaves the prince in safety!

Omr. (without) Chase the villain—
Quick!—let him not escape to tell the tale
Of our approach—quick—follow!——

Enter OMREAH, *not recognizing them, and rushing wildly on, as if against an enemy.*

More assassins!——
What ho, there!—to the rescue!

[*Recovering himself, and recognizing* BRANCHO *and* LOGAMAH.

Prdon, friends!
I'm chafed, and hunted, till my dizzy sight
Scarce knows its office. Twice within thesesix hours
Have I escaped the European bloodhounds
Montalbert baits against me.
Bra. Thank the gods!
Omr. I do! I do!—They spare me for their work
Of retribution, and I will perform
That sacred task of blood, to the last drop
That curdles in the veins of him I hate.
What! is his guilty soul so much afraid
Of open combat with the man he has wrong'd,
That he must dodge me thus, and set his hirelings
Upon my path!—Let them beware of me,
For the wild quarry yet may make a spring,
And rend his dastard hunters!
Log. They have reach'd
The end of all their triumph, for I bring you
News that confirm your purpose and your power.
Omr. What!—from the North?—ha! ha! is Maloch roused?
Has he found heart to join our enterprise?
Log. My brother Carbal spurred him to the venture;
Urging the shock Montalbert has received
At Guadaloupe, and this so fair occasion
To join and crush the remnant of the French.
Omr. 'Twas bravely reason'd: Maloch joins us, then?
Log. He does: he knows your warriors are in march,
And trusts to see you in his tents to-night.

To-morrow, by the dawn of day, we purpose
To pour upon the French.
Omr. That when the fate
Of Guadaloupe drives back Montalbert hither
For shelter and repose, yon blazing fortress
May be the bonfire of his welcome here,
And sudden death his sanctuary—Oh!
Death to himself alone!—unequal fate!
Why can I reach no further? Why has he
No ties like mine—no wife, no child, on whom
I might repay the slaughter of my own,
And strike a three-tongued dagger to *his* heart,
Such as now cankers mine!——
Log. Know you not, then,
That he comes here a bridegroom?
Omr. Can it be?——
Can fate relent?—and brings his bride to us?
Log. Perchance to-morrow: therefore we propose
To make th' attack at dawn, lest he arrive
With further force, and foil us.
Omr. Why not strike
This very night?—there will be work enough
Still left for us to-morrow—Back to Maloch!
Say we are coming.—— [*Exit* LOGAMAH.
Holy Brancho, pray
The blessing of our gods: then let the warriors
March on at once, northward, to Maloch's tents.
The dusk will veil you as you pass the fort——
March!
Bra. You're obey'd.
[*Exit* BRANCHO. *Wild music. The Indians disappear from the rocks.*
Omr. Come, great Montalbert! bring
Thy bride, to see and share the devastation

To-morrow's day-break shall reveal!—To-morrow!
Thou know'st it is the consecrated day,
The anniversary of that which brought
Death on *my* home.—'Twas such an eve as this,
So soft, so calm, that, sixteen summers since,
Usher'd that bloodiest morn. Even now, I feel
Hot on my flesh, the fretting of the chains
Montalbert lock'd about me! Even now,
The same devouring fever kindles here,
(striking his head)
That madden'd me, when I beheld my child
Seiz'd by his ruffians—saw my darling wife,
The gracious daughter of a line of kings,
Murder'd before mine eyes!—No more, no more,
Or in the whirl of my distemper'd brain,
The great revenge I seek will be forgot,
And my heart burst too soon!—Gods of our land,
Let him but see his bride, like mine, made captive,
And sacrificed by me, as mine by him——
Then, in whatever shape of bitter death,
Or bitterer life, it please ye cast my lot,
Body and soul I give myself unto you,
A martyr—but a conqueror! [*Exit.*

END OF THE FIRST ACT.

ACT II.

SCENE I.

Before the French fortress, a woody scene.

OMREAH *enters cautiously, and is met by* LOGAMAH.

Log. Prince Omreah !
So near the hostile fort ?
Omr. My warriors wind
Among these woods to gain the northward pass,
Which leads to Maloch's tent ; while I, alone
And unobserved, creep close upon the fort ;
Seeing, unseen, what point of its defence
Is best assailable.
Log. Our tribe's suspected.
My brother Carbal, for his interview
With England's officers at Guadaloupe,
Has been arrested ; and at dawn to-morrow
Must suffer death——
Omr. Must suffer death ! The sacred
Hereditary servant of our gods !
Such sacrifice will only heat our warriors
To fiercer fury. Was he mad, to treat
With Europeans ?—he deserves his fate.
Log. But for the aid *he* has secured from England,

Our enterprize were vain.
Omr. I thank you, friend,
That I am timely warn'd of this alliance:
If I assist the attack, it shall be made
Before the hateful sons of Europe come
To share our glory, or to thwart our justice!
Log. Soft! a French guard draws near: we must divide——
Omr. Take thou the rocky path; I will observe
Their movements from this thicket: in an hour
We'll meet at Maloch's tent.
[*Exit* LOGAMAH. OMREAH *conceals himself in a thicket.*

Enter D'ARCY *and Soldiers, meeting* COLMAR, *who is followed by* KATHELRADE.

Col. D'Arcy, well met.
Our tasks are not completed: with each hour
The danger grows upon us. We have news
That this dread Carib prince o' the south, Omreah,
For whose rebellious head we have, in vain,
Proclaim'd so great reward, has left his hills,
And marches hither.
Kath. Hearest thou these dangers,—
Know'st thou the terror of Omreah's arms,—
And yet wilt slay my son, my guiltless Carbal,
The lightest breathing of whose holy voice,
Could swell, or still the storm?
Col. Peace, woman, peace!——
D'Arcy, select a guard: hasten to Maloch,
Our old ally: dwell on the perilous treason,

Whereof his priest, young Carbal, stands convicted:
Flatter his pride—play on his subtle nature,
And tell him, if he would preserve our friendship,
And wipe the stain of treachery from his tribe,
He must, o' the instant, raise his northern warriors,
And march them to our aid, by break of day.
D'Arcy. I shall not fail.
Col. King Maloch's tents are scarce
A short league hence: Before the midnight bell,
I look to see you at the fort again.
The watchword is, Defend.
[*Exeunt* D'Arcy *and Soldiers.*
Kath. Defend,—'tis apt——
For a wrong'd mother's curse is on your heads.
Oh, murderers! were Montalbert here, your tongues
Had fester'd ere they had presumed to utter
The death-doom of my son!
Col. Montalbert knows
Thy Carbal's guilt.
Kath. 'Tis false! he is *not* guilty!
Col. Nay more; Montalbert's lips pronounced the judgment,
That he should die at dawn.
Kath. I'll not believe it!
His judgment—Be it so: I am justly punish'd!
I was the bond-slave of Montalbert's mother;
My breast gave suck to him: still, as he grew,
I lov'd him as my own: He turned his arms
Against my hapless country: all my race
Cursed him; but I was faithful. To this hour
I've loved him still: and he rewards me now

By the foul murder of my son, the stay
Of my lone widowhood. Oh, mercy, mercy!
Is there no way to save him?
Col. 'Tis decreed. [*Going.*
Kath. A moment—
Col. Pity struggles against justice;
I must be gone: Omreah is in force,
And active duties call me. Fare thee well:
And if thou can'st, be patient. [*Exit.*
Kath. Patient, say'st thou!
Patient to-night, when my son dies at morning!
May heaven's swift justice overtake Montalbert,
For this last blackest sin! Montalbert, thee—
And all the offspring of usurping Europe!
Omr. *(stealing forward.)* The metal glows to a red heat; 'tis now
That we may fashion it.
Kath. Come thick upon him
Trouble, alarm, and peril! press him down,
Ye English foes, that humble France and him!
And thou, Omreah, kindred of my race,
Whose very name makes pale his officers,
And scares them thus to cry abroad for help,
Come on, ere help arrive: rush on the fort,
While yet but half prepared, and in the tumult
Unlock the fetters of my wretched son!
Omr. What would you venture, Kathelrade, for this?
Kath. Who art thou, that dost ask me?
Omr. He your prayers
Demanded. After sixteen years, you look
Once more upon Omreah.
Kath. Does my sight
Deceive me? or do I indeed behold

Him who has suffered, from this fell Montalbert,
Wrongs only less than mine?
Omr. Thou art an Indian,
Whose land white men have ravaged: thou'rt a mother,
Whose son, e'en now a white man means to slay:
So stung, wilt thou be patient, till the blow
Fall irremediable, or wilt thou rather
Advance a purpose that shall right thy country,
And save thy son from death?
Kath. Shew but the way,
And let my wrongs be pledges for my faith!
Omr. Then on what errand are those soldiers sent,
Who parted hence but now?
Kath. To Maloch's quarter,
To levy aids against thy fear'd approach.
Omr. And when return they to the fort?
Kath. Ere midnight.
Omr. 'Tis well—Tis well—their watchword is——
Kath. "Defend."
Omr. Enough: you've sworn——
Kath. I have: what wouldst thou more?
Omr. The time cuts off all further parley now:
Wait in the outer court-yard of the fortress,
At ten to-night, firm in the faith you've pledg'd;
Then shall you know the rest, and see your son
Restored to liberty. Now we shall need
No English aids. *(going.)*
Kath. 'Tis heaven that interposes,
To save my son, its holy minister!
Omr. (returning.) How many are the centinels that guard

The outer gates?
Kath. But two——
Omr. Ply them with drink:
And drug their goblets with such sleepy herbs
As best may lull the senses. Note my words,
And fare thee well. [*Exit.*
Kath. Do but preserve my son,
And to the last you shall command his mother!
[*Exit.*

SCENE II.

A grassy space; sunset over the sea.

Enter CLAUDINA, MARIAN, *and French soldiers.*

Clau. How distant are we, soldiers, from your fort?—
Sold. Scarce a short mile.
Clau. It is a lovely sunset;
The evening breeze from land blows healthfully
Over my fever'd cheek; and as it cools
The scented turf,-a thousand odours breathe
Freshly upon the sense.
Sold. Aye, gentle lady,
You'd little guess, to see these mossy tufts
That spring so green, how few short summers past,
The ground we tread upon lay crimson'd deep,

With human gore!

Clau. My soul grows chill within me!
What place is this?

Sold. The field where, two years since,
My lord Montalbert overthrew the English.

Clau. Here then Trefusis met his fate?

Sold. Even so:
We sought his body, when the fight was over;
But dust, and smearing wounds baffling our search,
We made one general grave for all the slain,
Where yonder little hillock swells.

(He points to the spot.

Clau. Good friend,
Go slowly forward; I will follow straight.

Mar. Madam, the path——

Clau. Is easy—I shall find it:
I will but pause a moment—dearest Marian——
Nay, I entreat you, grant me this request.

[MARIAN *and Soldiers retire.*

Clau. Now, now, Trefusis, dear lost lord of all
My bosom's tenderness! uncheck'd, unwitness'd,
I may pour forth the gushing tears that choke me,
And breathe unto thy memory my sighs
Of grief, and love eternal.

TREFUSIS *enters, and looks around; but does not at first perceive* CLAUDINA.

Tre. I have foil'd
These hot-pursuing French; but my poor Carbal
Remains their prisoner. This should be my path,

Tow'rd Maloch's tents:—Too well do I remember
The fatal ground I tread!

Clau. (Whose face is averted from the side by which Trefusis *has entered.)*

Oh pardon me,
Montalbert, if I wrong my wedded faith
So far, to take this last, last, cold farewell
Of my Trefusis, my affianced husband!
But this one sad indulgence! but this once
For all my griefs! Upon my bended knees
Thus let me cleave unto the hallowed earth
That doth enshrine him, call on his loved spirit,
And weep my soul away!

[Claudina *throws herself exhausted on the supposed grave of* Trefusis, *who, during the latter part of the preceding speech, has perceived, and anxiously listened to her.*]

Tre. It is, it is——
My own adored Claudina!—Rise, sweet mourner,
Lean on this faithful breast, and rest thee here.

Clau. (wildly.) What voice is this, that mocks my ear, as if
The stern and silent grave that hides him from me,
Should yield him back to life and speech again!

Tre. Was I so lov'd, then, only so to lose her?
Accursed treachery!

Clau. I am wandering!
'Tis but the echo from my own sad heart,
That wilder'd with a strange and sorrowful dream
Over his grave, thus cheats my weary sense,
Waking fantastic sounds!

Tre. Look up and bless me,
My love, my wife!
Clau. Oh, speak that word again——
Call me again your wife! let me be sure
It is no phantom breathes this music to me,
But my true lord, that lives, and moves, and speaks,
And claims me for his own!
Tre. It is, indeed!
Gaze on me, dearest, still, and let me drink
The light of those sweet looks!—why dost thou start
So wildly from me? Once again I tell thee,
'Tis no unreal vision.
Clau. Would it were!
Oh would my aching sight could think it still
Unreal!—loose me!—nay, I do beseech,
Command you, loose me!
Tre. How have I offended,
That I am grown thus hateful to Claudina?
Clau. Oh no! you are all goodness still—'tis I,
Who in an evil moment——
Tre. I would spare you
The painful tale, Claudina:—yes, I know,
You are married to Montalbert!
Clau. Can it be,
You are informed how deeply I have wrong'd you,
And yet speak to me in such gentle accents?
Tre. Too well I know the treacherous arts that gain'd you,
The forged report of my untimely death,
By which we are made wretched!
Clau. Forged report!
Oh—forged by whom?
Tre. By thy false husband, lady!

Clau. Montalbert!
Tre. Aye, by him!
Clau. Then heaven forgive him,
The darkest, deepest, cruellest deceit
That ever braved perdition.—But twelve days!
Oh had we met twelve little days before,
We had been happy! Thankless that I am,
Is it not happiness enough for me
To know you live?
Tre. I do but live in vain,
Since not for you!
Clau. Strange thoughts flock fast upon me.
Why art thou here? where hast thou tarried from me
So long? How cam'st thou hither? Oh, make haste
To leave these fatal precincts: should my lord
Approach, we're both undone!
Tre. 'Tis well admonish'd!
This sad encounter had almost effaced
The memory of what I came to do.
Clau. Your looks are terrible! what is't you purpose?
For generous pity——
Tre. Turn those eyes away,
Lest their soft influence quite relax the strength
Of my wrought nerves, and melt me to a coward.
Clau. What would you do?
Tre. Preserve a life that's dearer
Than the rich centre of this new found world,
Whose dust is gold.
Clau. *My* life! I understand.—
You're sent by England to pursue the blow
That drove our vanquish'd force from Guadaloupe.——

Oh! after this long parting, are you come
At last as the invader of the land
That gives *me* shelter? Silent?—then my fears
Speak but too true. You have surprised the fort?
Tre. (*taking her hand.*) 'Twere treason should
I tell you more.—Fly, fly,
And let me save you!
Clau. Never! I can feel
The wrong Montalbert has inflicted on me
But I am still his wife, and in the hour
Of grief and peril, I will not desert him.
Tre. Generous Claudina! will no prayers engage you
To ward the dangers that beset yourself?
Clau. I care not for my life; but, while it lasts,
It shall be faithful to the sacred duties
For which heaven gave it.
Tre. There is yet a way!
Beneath the northern turret of your fort
A hidden chamber lies, known but to few
Ev'n of your garrison: learn from Montalbert
The passage thither, and, when danger threatens,
Fly to that shelter. But, I pray you, breathe
No hint of this my warning—Should you put
The French upon their guard, my life and fame
Would pay the forfeit of my fond disclosure.
Clau. My heart may break—but never shall
betray you! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.

MALOCH'S *tent.*

Wild music.

Enter MALOCH, *and* LOGAMAH *conversing, preceded by Caribs.*

Log. At break of day he dies.
Mal. Unhappy Carbal!
I ever fear'd a danger from his zeal
To join these English with us: He has haunted
The tents of Europeans, 'till his heart
Forgets to hate them. Not that I would have
This shew of friendship with the English, thrown
Aside as yet. Trefusis, Carbal's friend,
May for awhile be useful.
Log. He arrives.

Enter TREFUSIS.

Mal. You're welcome, European, from the durance
Wherein Montalbert has so long detained you.
Tre. Hail to king Maloch!
Mal. Carbal's late detention
Must be redress'd. Omreah will assist us

To plan the needful measures of attack;
And though we chance to find him harsh of speech,
And ill inclined to European friendships,
We must bear with him.
Tre. I have heard his history,
And will not quarrel with the rage that heats
His deeply injured spirit. [*Shouts behind.*
Tre. Hark! what shouts
Of gladness rend the air?
Mal. Omreah comes;
And snuffing at the sport, like hounds of proof,
Our warriors yell their joy.

Enter OMREAH, *followed by* BRANCHO, *and Caribs.*

Omr. Brother, well met in such a cause—though late.
Mal. Believe me, prince,
If I have not with earlier haste adventured
In the just quarrel we have now engaged to,
No slavish fear repress'd me, nor the weakness
Of tardy age; but long experience, teaching
To wait occasion: that the blow, as now,
Being struck upon a weaken'd enemy,
Might do its work at once.—You have survey'd
Their strength: how stand they?
Omr. You shall better learn
From certain messengers of theirs, whose course
I have with pains outrun; upon my risk
Make prisoners of them all: the moment presses,

For lo, they come: I'll answer 't when 'tis done.

Enter D'Arcy, *and French soldiers.*

D'Arcy. How now?—what means this throng of armed men?

Mal. Hast thou not heard Omreah's force is up?
'Twas fit we arm'd to meet him.

D'Arcy. Why, well spoken:
And therefore I have sought you, to request,
As you would keep our customed amity,
That, with such force as you can raise o' the instant,
You join our garrison ere break of day.

Mal. We shall be duly there.

D'Arcy. This welcome answer
Shall straightway be returned. [*Going.*

Omr. Less hurry, sir;
Evening begins to close: The dews are damp,
And, lest they chance to chill you, 'twill be fit
You rest you here to-night. You are our prisoners.

[*Meanwhile* Omreah's *attendants have been surrounding* D'Arcy *and the French soldiers with a guard of Caribs; and, as* Omreah *concludes, the French party are made prisoners.*]

Omr. At last, the work begins:—to it, and prosper!

D'Arcy. What snare is this?

Omr. One that may lime, ere long,
A bird of stronger wing. Lead them apart;

And strip from each his armour and his habit.
[*Exeunt Caribs, and French soldiers prisoners.*
I, and some certain of my warriors, must
Assume the arms and covering of these French:
And, cloak'd in that disguise, speed through the dusk
Unto their fort. The watchword is, "Defend,"
Which, being whisper'd to the drowsy sentinel,
We gain the fort within—
Mal. What is't you purpose?
Omr. There waits a guide, whose woman's heart a sting
Keeps vigilant—the mother of your Carbal:
She will conduct our steps, where we may crouch
Till sleep has made all quiet: then spring forth,
Strike down the guard, and throwing wide the gates,
Let in your stormy multitude. The cloak
And sword!—Come, bring them in!
[*Re-enter Caribs, with the cloaks and arms of the French soldiers.*]
Tre. It is a masque,
Bespeaking bloody revel!
Mal. Your device
Is hasty, prince.
Omr. I meant it should be so,
That we may not require your English friends
From Guadaloupe. Would ye be fools, and fight,
Faint, bleed, in working off one master's yoke,
To let another grind you?
Tre. Calmly, warrior;
Temper the splenetic courage, that sits on you

So proud and wanton, and take heed in time
What precipice it spurs to.
Omr. (turning suddenly round.) What art thou?
A white man!—Why, I know thee then; and knowing,
I hate and spurn thee.
Tre. I am slow to anger,
Were this a time for discord; but the hour
Calls for close fellowship: and he amongst us
That stirs a finger out of concert now,
Loses his cause and country!
Mal. He says well;
And has a voice in this our enterprize,
As potent as our own.
Omr. Is't so? A white man
Associate in command? Why then, farewell!
Call off my forces!—call them off!—I'll make
No league with such confederates. Let their fort
Remain: I can defy their puny children
In my wild glens, old nature's fortresses,
Where they would quake to climb.
Mal. Be patient, chief!
By his assistance——
Omr. Why was I deceived?
You knew, had such a partner been proposed,
I should have scorn'd your league!
Tre. Our common object
Is to destroy our common enemy,
And set our Carbal free. Your stratagem
Bids fair, and you shall find no jealousy
Thwart its accomplishment.
Mal. How says Omreah?

Omr. Is it a natural hate that sets these white men
At one another's throats?—Out! out! decoys,
To sell us to our foe.
Mal. You are too sudden:
What's to be done?
Omr. Do as you list, I care not.
Mal. (aside, to Tre.*)* Your presence ruffles him: if you will leave us,
He may be led more aptly. *(Aloud.)* Be your task,
To post our warriors for the assault, without
The fort, and watch the unclosing of the gates.
Tre. Let me have cautious comrades—
Omr. Give him safe ones,
Who if the cloak of 's honesty should slip
A rent, will make so bold to gather it
Up with a dagger's point.
Mal. Here is your guide.
[*Presenting one of the Caribs.*
Tre. I will make haste to seek some covert ground,
Where, in safe readiness, my valiant band
May wait Omreah's signal for the assault.
If I come safely off, we shall again,
Ere midnight, change a greeting by the blaze
O' the enemy's fort: if I am doom'd to fall,
There is no quarry death can strike more apt,
When all the sweetness I had wish'd to live for,
Blesses another's lip. [*Exit with Caribs.*
Mal. Just spirits aid you!
Omr. Let him go! venture! perish! Where's the matter,
If, for the myriads of our brethren murder'd
To glut the European throats with gore,

One white man die to profit *us*?—One die!—
Why should one live!—To spawn in our warm sun,
To taint the free air of our isle, and hiss
His green infections on us, whose rank crest
We have the strength to crush?

Mal. Is my fair show
Put on so well, that it deceives Omreah?
Like you, I loathe them all: like you, I groan
For sweet revenge; but mean to take it wisely:
For age, and the example of our tyrants,
Have taught me, to give hate its way no further
Than interest travels with it.

Omr. Cry you mercy!
I'm of a downright temper, and unvers'd
In politic turns.

Mal. It were not safe, thus early
To drop the guise of friendship: should we fail
In this attempt to-night, our only refuge
Would be the English aids from Guadaloupe.
Therefore be wary yet: lull this Trefusis
With cordial seeming: second him i' the fight,
As you shall find his skill and hardihood
Worthily bear you out; and let revenge,
Which is the wise man's servant, not his master,
Wait for its turn, and check its thirsty lip,
Till safety pledge the draught.

Omr. I will not do it:
You, if you will, may wear a double face;
For you've so long been leagued with these deceivers,
Taking their stamp, speech, customs, arts, and seemings,
(As might indeed behove their subject king,)
That you can play the traitor, as if born to't:

But I, whose only converse with their tribe
Has been disgrace and torture—I, with whom
They never used more kind interpreter
Than ruthless force, the fetter, and the scourge—
I will not palter with my honest hate,
By stooping, even in show, to treat with bandits,
Whom my mind scorns, as my free heart abhors
them!

Mal. Nay, use your pleasure.

Omr. I have none but vengeance.

[*Turns up the stage.*

Enter a Carib messenger, who speaks aside to MALOCH.

Mal. Be patient, and that vengeance is your
own:
For here is one with tidings, that Montalbert,
The cause of all your wrongs, is with his bride
Come to the Headland, and this very night
Sleeps in the fort.—Now, will Omreah quit
The league we've made?

Omr. (*turning round, and rushing forward.*)
Come with his bride?—what here,
In Dominica?—This was what I pray'd for!—
In person!—But shall I be sure of him?
Shall I be sure, that when I have him down,
No white allies shall interpose betwixt
Me and my prize,—to enforce for one another
That civilized, that christian law of mercy,
Our dusky children never yet partook?

Mal. You shall be satisfied.

Omr. By heaven, I will!
Where is the daughter of my youthful strength,

My little smiling daughter? Did they spare
Her harmless infancy? Where is my wife?
Was she spared to me, when Montalbert's ruffians
Swept like a hurricane o'er these summer isles,
And blasted all my race?—*His* wife is come!
Let him look to her!—a new married wife,
Not cold yet in his love! Let him look to her;
For the fierce sun, that lights to-morrow's sky,
Shall shew her for the last time to his eyes
A lifeless body! Up, ye hardy spirits
That own me for your leader!—whet your fangs,
And follow while I cheer you to a prey
Shall flesh them deep—Break up, I say, and follow! [*Exeunt.*

END OF THE SECOND ACT.

ACT III.

SCENE I.

A quadrangle within the fort, surrounded by cloisters.

Enter KATHELRADE, *ushering in* OMREAH, LOGAMAH, *and several Caribs, in the disguise of French soldiers.*

Omr. We're safe; the watch suspect us not.
Kath. Omreah,
I half repent me. 'Tis a bloody purpose,
And if you ope the gates——
Omr. Amid the tumult
Your son escapes: if not, he perishes;
That's all.—No more: we trifle. Is it time?
Kath. Not yet: the twinkling lights that still appear
Across the court-yard from the upper casements,
Shew there remain some watchers. I must bring you
To the accustom'd quarters of those soldiers
Whom you thus personate.
Omr. They're safely stow'd:
They'll not reclaim their lodging.
Kath. Get you in.
[*Exeunt* LOGAMAH *and Caribs.* *The firing of guns is heard.*

Omr. What's this? Am I betray'd?
(grasping her wrist.)
Kath. Release me.
Omr. Whither
Would you depart?
Kath. To seek Montalbert. Listen—
Those guns announce his coming.
Omr. He is welcome.——
At last my foe is given into my hand!

MONTALBERT *crosses the cloisters, with* COLMAR.

Aye! there he passes! sixteen years have wrought
But little change in him. I feel his presence
Upon my breast, as if a reptile crawl'd
Athwart the shrinking flesh.
Kath. (endeavouring to pass OMREAH.) He may relent—
He may repair my wrongs.
Omr. Is this the hate,
Vow'd everlasting?—this the unquenchable
And deadly flame of injured woman's rage?
Can he repair *my* wrongs? Can he repair
The wrongs of our dear country? Nay, 'tis vain
To struggle thus.
Kath. Let me but see him once,
And try his mercy.—Set me free, I say!
Or with my cries I'll wake the garrison,
And yield you prisoner.
Omr. If one sound escape thee,
'Tis thine own death-note—aye, and Carbal's too!
(drawing his dagger.)
Kath. Thy looks and words have more than human horror!

Omr. Logamah! lead that wayward woman hence,
And keep her with you, safe, and silent too,
Until the signal of this horn awake
The echoes of the fort.

LOGAMAH *re-enters, and takes* KATHELRADE *by the hand.*

Kath. Remorse and terror
Possess me wholly.—Was there no redemption
For the son's life, but in the mother's treason?
Oh, Carbal! I have sear'd my heart to save thee!
[*Exit, with* LOGOMAH.

Omr. Why then
I'll not delay: her soul-sick fantasies
May rise again, and strangle our attempt.
The lights have disappear'd: the fort is quiet:
Let me but view these courts, and their defence,
Then wake the blast of death! [*Exit.*

SCENE II.

MONTALBERT'S *apartment in the fort.*

Enter MONTALBERT *with a map.* COLMAR *attending.*

Mont. Here, take the map,
And in the morning let our men begin
The reparations I have noted there.
[*Exit* COLMAR.

The Caribs gather strength: The English threaten:
And these redoubts, half weatherworn, afford
A frail defence. Such are the auspices
Of my long-courted wedlock, which to compass,
I have reached so far in guilt. From his deep cell
The curses of Trefusis seem to rise,
And vindicate the bride, whom but her faith
In my suggestion of his death has drawn
Unwilling to my arms.—My gentle wife!

Enter CLAUDINA.

Clau. Your wife in name, yet not indeed your wife.
Mont. You wander, love: fatigue has overcome you.
Clau. Not so, my lord: a witness is alive,
Who but too quickly may confirm the truth
Of what I speak:—Trefusis may confirm it!
Mont. What sayst thou?
Clau. Start not: they that have been buried
Are not the dead alone.—You are confused—
Confused, my lord, and shun your wife's observance.—
Fatal deceit, that plucks from wedded love
Its fairest grace and flow'r, sweet confidence,
Abashing the clear front of blushing honour,
To vouch a falsehood! I repeat, Trefusis
Alive, and bent on vengeance!
Mont. Who has seen him?
Clau. I have, and talked with him, and learnt from him
All *you* would hide.

Mont. Then Carbal *has* betrayed me!
Clau. Dost *thou* complain of that? thou, that art worst,
Of all betrayers! with what new device
Wilt thou acquit thee of thy treachery
To me, and to my own betrothed lord?
Mont. Hast thou then no forgiveness for a fault,
Which love of thee has prompted?
Clau. Love of me!
Love without truth! Oh, do not so profane
The sacred name. Love knows no dark deceit,
No frozen, false reserve—In love's communion,
Heart beats to heart, and soul to soul transfused,
As meeting rivulets, in whose pure confluence
Each lucid drop commingles!
Mont. If my life,
Through all its future years devoted only
To confidence and thee, might yet repair
One only crime, and win thy heart again—
Clau. Banish the hope! my hand thou dost possess,
For thou hast gained it from me by a fraud:
But not thy sum of years can ever win thee
That heart which thou hast stabb'd; nor stifle here
The hapless, hopeless love, which thou thyself
Didst pledge to my true lord!
Mont. There's no reproach
For the deceit by which I have undone thee,
But finds an answering pang within my breast,
Of deep sincere repentance.
Clau. What avails it?
If with thy floods of tears thou couldst wash out
All trace of memory, or dissolve the bonds,
The unhallow'd bonds, that knit our fates together,

There were a virtue in thy penitence—
Nay, could'st thou turn aside the punishment,
Which heav'n but now sends down on thee and thine,
Through him whom thou hast wrong'd——
Mont. Vain threats, Claudina.
Clau. Nay, I speak true.—yet what I speak, I know not.
Mont. Explain.
Clau. I may not, cannot tell thee more——
[OMREAH'S *horn is heard without.*
There—there it comes!
Mont. Trust me, some weak imposture.
[*The horn is again heard.*
Again! what shouts are these?
[*The Caribs' yell is heard without.*
Clau. Oh, fly with me
To the sunk chamber, which, I'm told, extends
Beneath the northern turret.—
Mont. Your Trefusis
Counsell'd you this! what, he would brand my fame
With flight! No! it shall shelter thee; but I,
Whate'er the shock, will brave it.
Clau. Quickly, then,
Or all is lost!
[*Exit* CLAUDINA. MONTALBERT *turns, on hearing the voice of* COLMAR *behind him.*
Colm. (without.) General, defend your life.
Mont. I am prepared.

COLMAR *enters.*

Now, which way lies the danger?
Colm. The fort's in flames: a sudden enemy
Has forced the gates.

Mont. Who are the foes? The English
From Guadaloupe?
Colm. The Caribs: and Omreah
Their leader!—in they pour, by the red light,
In many a dusky swarm, blackening the fort!
Mont. Conduct my wife to the recess, beneath
The northern tow'r—I'll give the rallying word,
France, and the King!

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.

Before the fort. The fort on fire. Battle.

Enter KATHELRADE, CARBAL, *and* LOGAMAH.

Kath. Didst thou in sooth then plot
The treason, from whose penalty thy mother
Has dared so much to save thee?
Car. Yes; if truly
It be a treason to assist my country
Against a foreign tyrant. You, my mother,
Are guilty of like treason, in preserving
Your death-devoted son.
Kath. 'Tis but too true:
For your deliverance, I have sacrificed
One hardly less beloved—my foster-son,
My lord and master.

[*Skirmish. Drums and trumpets.*

Car. Lo! the battle thickens:
Bear we our mother to some safer spot.
Log. She is secure. Montalbert has commended

His foster parent to the especial care
Of all his followers--marry, little guessing,
How much he owes her.
Kath. Were his thoughts so kind
To his betrayer? Shall I fly to him,
Confess my treach'ry, and implore his pardon?
No; he will not believe, the breast that nurs'd him
Could have been steel'd to such a hard extreme!
Car. Live for your country, and your sons, and banish
The thought of him who was the foe of all.
Kath. Yet I will seek, and speak to him, and tell him
All I have done and suffer'd—oh for power
To rescue him, as I have rescued you!
[*As she is going*, CARBAL *attempts to withhold her.*]
Your leave—The war that shakes yon battlements
Is peace to that within my burning heart——
I will not be detain'd. [*Exit.*
Car. Ever extreme
In love, as hate! This is an extasy,
May need our watching. [*Exeunt.*

[*The flames ascend. Part of the fort is heard to fall in. Shouts, martial music, and the clashing of weapons.*]

Enter MALOCH, *from among the fortifications.*

Mal. The assault has stirred me.
This arm, unshrunk, albeit for many a year
Disused from blood, rejoices in its strength,--

And longs for fresh encounter. Now, Trefusis,
How fare their boasted bulwarks?

Enter TREFUSIS.

Tre. All's in flame.
Our wild troops, dashing through the smoke, hunt down
Th' astonish'd French; and mingling with the roar
Of crackling fire, Omreah's merciless yell
Comes thundering hoarse, as drunkenly he plies
His sword in their best blood.
Mal. Where fights Montalbert?
Tre. At yonder portal, with some thir y followers:
The rest, with desp'rate energy, defend
The northern tow'r, the only point that's proof
Against the spreading fire. To gain that tow'r
I've cut my way thus far. [*Exit.*
Mal. No doubt the bride,
For whom Montalbert shut him from the world,
Is placed within its walls. Why, be it so.
It is by private springs, the public engine
Works to advantage. All but that one pile,
Thanks to Omreah's stratagem, we've gain'd,
Without the English guns.

Enter MONTALBERT.

Mont. It is in vain
To rally my dishearten'd fugitives:
I can but seek the tow'r that yet holds out,
And perish in its ruins.

Mal. Turn, Montalbert,
And perish here!
Mont. Thou subtle traitor, hence!
Thou, on whose aid our confidence relied,
Ev'n as upon a brother's;—dost thou face me?
Mal. Fool! that couldst hope assistance in thy need,
From forced allies, and take our fear for friendship,
If thou hast yet so much of hope in thee,
To think thy life worth struggling for, defend it.
Mont. Nay then, commend thee to the gods thou serv'st,
For thy last hour draws near.
[*They fight.* MALOCH *falls.*
Mal. Why did I arm
In this too sudden quarrel? Thou prevail'st,
Usurper! but there comes a comfort yet;—

Enter OMREAH.

For this my brother will not let my bones
Bleach to the scorching sunbeam, unrefresh'd
With my destroyer's blood. [*Dies.*
Omr. I need no spur
To vindicate thy death! For my own wrongs,
Wrongs all too countless for my tongue to speak,
Boil in my blood, and thus I spring upon him!
Mont. Hold off thy hand! sure I should know thine aspect!
Omr. Thou should'st, indeed; for not a feature here,
But in its pale and careworn lineaments
Bears damning trace of thee!

Mont. Hear me, Omreah:
I fain would spare——
Omr. No parley!—there was none
When thou didst swoop upon my peaceful realm,
With faulchion, and with flame! I'll have no respite!
[*They fight:* MONTALBERT *strikes the sword out of* OMREAH'S *hand.*
Mont. Now, savage, wilt thou sue for terms?
Omr. (*Leaping upon* MONTALBERT, *snatching his sword, and bringing him upon one knee,*) Nor grant them—
For I have made thee sure!
[*He stands over* MONTALBERT.

Enter CARBAL, LOGAMAH, BRANCHO, *and Caribs.*

Applaud me, warriors!
For lo, my arm has overcome Montalbert—
The head, the spring of all our country's woes,
The dread Montalbert! Priests, draw near, and curse
The slayer of your king!
Carb. The king!—alas!
[*Perceiving the body of* MALOCH.]
Raise and give due observance to the body.
Omr. Aye, we will solemnize its obsequies
With fitting honours. Here's my offering,
The blood, that on the altar of the dead
Shall make the wholesom'st savour.
[*The body of* MALOCH *is lifted.*
Mont. If yon sword
Were in my grasp again, that I might have
Some partner in my death——

Omr. Why, so thou shalt;
Think'st thou I mean, so early in thy wedlock,
To part the bridegroom from the bride?
Mont. My bride!
Shall not her innocent life be sacred to you!
Omr. I have sent to seek her for thee. It is ever
Our custom, European, when we seize
A prisoner in our wars, to give his manhood
The fair occasion to approve itself,
In varied sufferance of our cunning'st tortures:
And (for I would not have it thought, the prisoner
On whom I build my glory, is but nerv'd
Like common men,) I will illustrate thee
With more than common penance: I will try
How well thy fortitude will bear the groans
Of her thou doat'st upon, as she receives
Her fate before thine eyes.
Mont. From what fell demon
Learn'dst thou this damned subtlety of torture?
Omr. It is in thee I hail my great instructor!
From thee I had it all!—and if it give
Thy breast but half that deep devouring anguish,
Which, to my shame, too much has shaken me,
The restless spirits of my wife and babe
Will have been well revenged. Lead him away,
And keep strict watch upon him.
Log. To the tow'r,
Where we have chain'd the rest o' the prisoners?
Omr. To whatsoever den affords most safety.
Look you to that; for if he break his bonds,
Your lives shall answer it.

[*Exit* MONTALBERT, *guarded.*

Omr. Now for the tow'r,
Where, as it seems, this bride, through whom my vengeance
Must be fulfill'd upon him, has been placed
For safety. On them, my brave people! on them!
Make no more prisoners, but let ravage loose,
For the avenging gods have given this night
To your long craving, that without remorse
You may strike home, strike deep, make sure, and spare not! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.

The vault under the northern tower; CLAUDINA *alone.*

Clau. Oh, what an hour has pass'd! Each crash, each cry
Shoots to my heart! In all events I'm wretched.
Montalbert's victory, is Trefusis' death—
And if Trefusis conquer, where's the hope
Of mercy for my husband—my betrayer,
Yet still my benefactor!—Soft, the noise
Ceases! This silence is more dreadful yet:
It is the calm of death!

Enter TREFUSIS.

Tre. Justice has triumph'd;
And you, beloved Claudina——
Clau. Is Montalbert
Alive?
Tre. As yet he is.
Clau. Then he is safe!
You will not harm an unresisting captive?
Tre. And yet I would not stand that captive's hazard
For his whole nation's wealth.
Clau. Hear me, Trefusis——
[TREFUSIS *turns away.*
He is my husband;—hear me but a moment—
I know it—you've been wrong'd—but he's my husband——
Tre. And therefore is a traitor—is he not?
In the near'st point, a false, abandon'd traitor,
Whose punishment will set you free.
Clau. Oh, horror!
Trefusis—if, as my fond heart once dream'd,
You've loved me truly, by that influence
I pray—nay, on my knees I thus adjure you,
Ev'n though for him you have no pity, yet
Have mercy upon me, his wretched wife!—
Will set me free! what, make a wife the cause
And accessary in her husband's murder!
No, no, you will not whelm that guilt upon me,
That deep, condemn'd remorse!
Tre. I have no tongue

To vent the struggles of my passionate heart,
And give it ease. Claudina! though those tears
Are pour'd for one who has most injured me;—
Nay, though his death would make thee mine
once more—
I will not harm thy husband!
Clau. Blessings on thee!
Tre. The only hope is in escape.
Clau. Oh, yes!
I will console his flight, will follow him
In banishment and sorrow, to repay
The debt I owe him, and repair the harshness
Of my too sharp reproaches.
Tre. I will strive
To aid the virtue which I fain would copy.
Through every corner of the tow'r that stands
Above these vaults, Omreah at this instant
Is seeking you; but these retreats will mock
His search. When he departs, the Indian priest,
Carbal, in whom I trust, shall guide your path
To that same cave on the sea-side, where late
I was imprisoned.
Clau. But, Montalbert—what
Shall be devised for him?
Tre. Be that my care;
I can, on my authority as leader
Of Maloch's warriors, change his guard, and
speed him
To the North Headland, where with you this
morning
He came on shore. Thence, by the coast, he soon
May row the boat that brought you, to the cave,
Where you will wait his coming; and from which
To Martinico, southerly, will be
A short day's voyage.

Clau. Faithful, much loved friend!
Nobly hast thou redeemed thy promise to me!
We part, 'tis like, for ever. The wide wastes
Of ocean will divide us: and I pray thee,
As we shall never, never meet again,
Strive thou, like me, to banish the remembrance
Of what has been; of thoughts, whose images,
Too dearly loved, must be indulged no more.
We must be firm; we must forget each other!
Tre. Forget! that word has more of anguish in it,
Than all we have endured! Forget, Claudina!
Clau. Yes, it must be. Fortune may ravish from us
All joys external; but it leaves us still
The godlike power to suffer, and to do,
As heav'n commands;—as thou hast done, Trefusis!

END OF THE THIRD ACT.

ACT IV.

SCENE I.

MONTALBERT'S *apartment in the fort.* MONTALBERT *fettered, walking backward and forward.*

Enter TREFUSIS.

Mont. (*not perceiving him.*) Death were to me
a boon; but for Claudina—
'Tis there I feel the pressure of my fate.
Trefusis!
Tre. Somewhat worn, perhaps, by years
Of drear captivity to great Montalbert;
Yet still that same Trefusis, whom, in days
Of happier note, while yet our hostile countries
Preserved the bond of peace, Montalbert loved
With friendship not unrecompens'd.
Mont. Thou dost
But plant another dagger in a heart
Already pierced to death.
Tre. Aye, that Trefusis,
Whom, not content to strip him of his freedom,
Thou hast despoil'd of more than life itself—
Of his betrothed wife!
Mont. Go on; go on—
I have deserv'd it all!
Tre. That same Trefusis,

Who, now that fortune leaves thy falling cause,
And thou thyself becom'st in turn a pris'ner,
Has sought thee thus, to reap a full revenge!

Mont. Thou canst not take my life so willingly
As I shall lose it. I have wrong'd—immur'd thee
Two tedious years.—Then strike. I will not shrink.
I have betray'd thy friendship—Still in doubt?
Nay, I have robb'd thee of thy love, Trefusis—

[TREFUSIS *half unsheaths his sword; but after a momentary struggle with himself, returns it to its scabbard.*]

Now, now, strike home, and search my heart!

Tre. I will,
Intrepid foe, but not with such a weapon,
As thou prepar'st for. 'Tis revenge enough
For me, to let thee know thy life and freedom
Are in my hand—that I restore them to thee—
That thy lov'd wife is sav'd to bless thy lot—
And that 'tis I have saved her!

Mont. Saved her, say you?
Is the command with you, and will you use it,
For my Claudina? Now you are indeed
Reveng'd! 'Twas fit I should be humbled thus,
Thus feel the virtue of the man I've wrong'd
Ascendant over me, and owe him more
Than life itself.

Tre. Rather owe all to her,
For whose dear sake this blow is warded from you.—
But your departure hence must be immediate,
Before Omreah guess it. Haste you straight
To the North Headland, where you left your bark,
And steer it down the coast to the same cave
Where I was prisoner. In that lone retreat,

Claudina is awaiting your arrival
To sail for Martinique. I have removed
Your guards; and in the darkness of the night
You'll gain the path securely.
Mont. I would thank you,
But want the voice. Yet, one thing more I need—
A trusty guide athwart these tangled glens
To the North Headland.

Enter KATHELRADE.

Kath. Is it here they guard
My foster son, my wrong'd Montalbert?
Mont. Com'st thou
To triumph in my fall? Oh, Kathelrade,
I knew the lot of war was made of strange
And fearful chances; but I deem'd that woman
Was faithful still.
Kath. I am—I am!—Could *I*
Have died ten thousand deaths, I'd not have spared them
In thy behalf—but my *son's* life depending
On my one word—how could a mother's voice
Withhold it?—Think of this, and you may yet
Forgive poor Kathelrade.
Mont. You time this aptly.
Inexorable justice would but ill
Become Montalbert now.
Tre. It is a wild
And wayward disposition. But she knows
Each mazy path o' th' island, and you need
A guide upon the sudden—May you trust her?

Kath. Oh yes! tell me but how to save or serve you,
And with my life I will redeem my crime.
Mont. I must accept her guidance, or abandon
All chance of flight, all hope of my Claudina.
Tre. Be circumspect; an English force will land
About this hour; and though with them your life
Would be secure, your liberty were hopeless.
No thanks, but on.
Mont. Farewell, my generous foe!
[*Exeunt* MONTALBERT *and* KATH.
Tre. This was indeed to my distracted heart
The sole revenge: for what extremity
Of harsh amends could have compensated
Such wrongs as mine, or brought to my relief,
Forgetfulness, or hope? [*Exit.*

SCENE II.

The Quandrangle in the fort.

Enter OMREAH, *and* CORBAL.

Omr. 'Twas in this tower,
Montalbert, as they say, conceal'd the women:
And I have sent for you, that, as we know not
The person of his wife, you may point out,
Among the female prisoners here assembled,
Which is Claudina.—Let the captives enter.
[*The female prisoners, and* MARIAN, *are brought in.*]

Unveil!—Now, priest——
Carb. Claudina is not here.
Omr. Not here! You play upon me! Look once more!
Not here?
Carb. I say, not here.
Omr. It is in vain
She strives to foil my search: If I beat up
Each thicket of the isle, she shall not 'scape me.
Send out our scouts to seek her; and let these,
And all the other captives who may come
Within your reach, be taken to the spot
Where we have stored the spoils, the spot adjoining
My tent, that I may have the earliest note
Of her detention. What's their number?—ten—
'Tis well: let them be presently brought in.
[*Exit.*
Mar. Alas! already, in this wild assault,
Claudina may have perish'd.
Carb. Fear not, Marian;
She's yet secure, within the secret chamber
Beneath this tow'r: where, had the time permitted,
You and these trembling women should have shar'd
Her hidden refuge. To my care Trefusis
Has trusted her, while he himself provides
Montalbert's safety. It is time to bring her
From her retreat: but, by our evil fortune,
The only passage to the cave wherein
I am to place her, is by that same tent
Whither Omreah has but now repair'd. [*Exit.*
Mar. Her griefs and dangers almost chase the thought
Of my own perils.

Re-enter CARBAL, *with* CLAUDINA.

Clau. Do we once again
Meet and embrace?
Carb. We must away.
Mar. But if,
To gain the cave you're bound to, you must pass
Omreah's tent, by what device propose you
To shun his lynx-eyed watch?
Carb. By your assistance.—
He has survey'd you all: has counted over
Your band, and is assured Montalbert's bride
Is not among these ten. Let her then take
Your station in the rank, and pass his tent
As one of those he has already view'd;
While, that the numbers may be still alike,
You shall remain behind.
Mar. Most joyfully.
Clau. Seek my own safety at my Marian's risk!
Oh, never!
Mar. I am not the more endanger'd,—
It is not my destruction they desire.
Do not reject this little aid.
Clau. My own
Too faithful Marian!
Carb. Marshal then your train,
And let us forward.—In the midst,—even thus.
[*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.

OMREAH'S *tent.* *A rocky amphitheatre.*

Enter OMREAH *and* CARIBS.

Omr. There, where the winding rocks have made an inlet,
Place ye the spoils and prisoners, under guard.
Now, bring you tidings of my enemy's bride?

Enter BRANCHO.

Bra. I am assured that she was seen to enter
The tower Trefusis storm'd, the northern tower;
And, if not still conceal'd within its walls,
By his permission must have been releas'd.
Omr. Then, though the mystery of her strange concealment
Be buried in his heart, I'll dig it forth—

Enter TREFUSIS, *and Indians.*

Bra. These are the warriors who besieged the tow'r—
The secret lies among them.
Omr. Which of you
Has dared release my captive?
Tre. You may spare
Your threatening gestures, prince: for it is I
Have given Claudina liberty: which here

I do again, before the assembled host,
Proclaim and ratify.
Omr. By Maloch's soul,
I say, she dies, although a thousand white men,
All arm'd like thee, stood threatening at thy back,
To force her from me.
Tre. I am resolute
In what I have declared. Our arms have earn'd
Much spoil in common: of which prize I claim
No costly share for my reward, but only
That captive, whom at all risks I will keep.
Omr. What! Is't for spoil that I have sold my blood?
Blood for base ore, as you do! I have girt
The sword upon my body for revenge,
And here it must be taken! For yourself,
If your own life be dear, produce the captive;
For her, as best becomes a duteous wife,
She shall partake her husband's speedy death,
In Maloch's funeral sacrifice.
Tre. Thou'rt foil'd,
Insatiate savage! I have snatch'd the prey
From those curs'd fangs, and marr'd thy feast of blood:
And while thou rav's't, and lift'st thy clenched hands,
And mutterest inward blasphemies against
Thy impious gods, Montalbert, with his bride,
Spreads his free sail to ocean's morning wind,
And, safe beyond thy reach of malice, scorns
Thy threats and thee—as I do!
Omr. They are safe—
Safe are they, traitor?—Let them! thou art left!—
Why stand you all like stocks, and fear to seize him?

Hear you not, how his sacrilegious hand
Has freed the victim, destin'd to appease
The spirit of your loved, your murder'd king?
[*The Caribs seize and disarm* TREFUSIS.
Tre. (*struggling.*) What, like a felon! If thy savage nature,
That riots in the blood of enemies,
Fear not the shedding of thine own, release me,
And let our equal blows end manfully
Our equal quarrel.
Omr. What, release thee now,
A self-convicted traitor to our cause!
Is't thus that Europeans use to deal?
Tre. Yet pause ere you proceed! the setting stars
Fade from the waning night, and tell the approach
Of those who shall repay this wrong upon you,
With fearful reck'ning—the expected force
Of powerful England.
Omr. I will brave the hazard—

Enter CARBAL, *with* CLAUDINA, *and the captives.*

So, priest! you have engaged a hopeful comrade.
Car. A pris'ner! how is this? or what's his crime?
Omr. The rescue of Montalbert and his bride—
A crime against us all: against the spirits
Of your slain king, and of my murder'd mate
And innocent babe, to whom I owe the death
Of their destroyer's wife.
Clau. Would that atonement
Content thee?

Omr. Who is this?
Carb. (agitated.) One of the captives,
Whom you before examined in the tow'r.
Omr. Speak, woman! hast thou tidings of Claudina?
Tre. No; she deceives you: she can tell you nothing.
Clau. Hear me.
Omr. I will: there's something in thy face,
That strikes upon my soul, and seems to bring me
A lost reflection of departed thoughts,
And things loved long ago. Speak! I will hear thee.
Clau. If I give up Claudina to your power,
Will you bestow upon me in exchange,
The life and pardon of such other captive
As I shall ask?
Omr. I will—I will—discover
My enemy's bride, and—
Clau. Swear then, by the gods!
Omr. I swear!
Tre. She raves—she knows not what she says.
Omr. Silence—my oath is pledged.
Clau. *I* am Claudina.
Omr. Art thou Montalbert's bride? Thank heav'n, that made thee
So much resemble her for whose lov'd memory
Thou art to suffer!
Clau. Now for my reward.
Omr. Claim it.
Clau. I claim the freedom of Trefusis.
Omr. Trefusis!
Clau. You have sworn.
Omr. 'Twas a rash oath—

But 'twas Omreah's, and it must be sacred—
Release the European.
Tre. Oh Claudina,
What hast thou ventured, and for whom?
Clau. For him
Who has done all for me.

Enter a Carib.

Omr. Now, whence art thou?
Carib. From the North Headland, where I have kept watch
For the expected landing of the English
From Guadaloupe.
Tre. Well, are they come?
Carib. They're landed,
And lie close ranged behind their vessels, waiting
Till duly summon'd hither.
Omr. (*To* TREFUSIS.) Tarry yet:
(*To* LOGAMAH.) Force off that ring he wears.
Tre. What further outrage,
Monster!
Omr. There is no Maloch now, to clog
With creeping policy my fixed resolve,
T'extirpate root and branch. (*To* LOGAMAH.) Produce the ring
To the commander of these white allies:
It is the token, which, as Maloch told me,
They would expect, lest France should gain some note
Of their arrival, and send false conductors,
To snare them. Say you had it from Trefusis:
They will accept you for their guide, and follow
What road you point.

Log. The cover'd swamp of reeds?
Omr. Thou hast it! excellent comrade, thou forstall'st
My very thought! the darkness of the night,
The wildly broken paths, and sudden turns
By copse and precipice, will cheat them on
To that invisible peril, where they fall
Ere they have time to fear. Once in, they plunge
And strive in vain: The thick engulphing quagmire
Swells round them with their bulk, and chokes down,
While you, that know the ground, will straightway gain
The narrow bridge of stones that threads the swamp,
And bring the tidings. [*Exit* LOGAMAH.
Tref. Dost thou think my country
So poor of strength, or so debased of spirit,
To brook a deed like this?
Omr. I have pronounced it.
We are the masters now; and when we've clear'd
These white pests from our land, and made it sure
With our own forts, and all those arts of war
The experience of your murderous tribe has taught us,
We'll keep our native isle, or, losing, die for 't.
Caribs. Long live Omreah! Let him reign among us!
Omr. Yet further: Lest some babbler reach the English,
Disclose the snare my guides are sent to frame,
And bring a force to take this victim from me,—
Station a guard to stop the pass, that leads
Tow'rd the North Headland. When the sacrifice

Is over, not before, set this man free.

[*He gives directions to several Indians, who go out.*]

Tre. I scorn a freedom so conferr'd! bestow it
Upon this innocent captive.

Omr. Shall I quit
The instinct heav'n has planted in all hearts,
The generous lust of natural, sweet revenge?
While Europe's wise and civilized savages
Cut throats, as artificial passions prompt,
Still, still let us, the sons of purer skies,
Placed here at nature's sources, where her spring
Bursts fresh and unpolluted, follow only
The genuine pulse she wakes, and freely feast
The inborn appetites of our fiercer spirits.

Clau. (*to* TREF.) Do not incense him to recall his oath,
Nor waste for me the life you owe your country.
I am mark'd out for an especial pain,
And am prepar'd to die;—but not to bear
The death of those I love.

Omr. And, that no chance
May frustrate my intentions, and preserve
The English from my toils, to interrupt
These vengeful obsequies,—hasten the rites!
And yonder, on the spot where stood their fort,
Pile up an altar for the sacrifice.
Half my revenge Montalbert's flight cuts off:
But, having her, I have his heart in pledge,
And will exact the forfeit.—She shall die,
And die by me! and he shall know that death,
And own at last Omreah's pow'r has reach'd him!

[*Exit.*

Tre. To perish thus, almost in sight of succour,
Aggravates death itself.

Carb. The only way
To reach the English, lies across the pass
Which he has sent to guard—all hope is lost!
Clau. I have abandon'd hope. (*to* TRE.) Friend, do not leave me:
Your lofty spirit will sustain my strength!
Tre. And what, Claudina, shall sustain my spirit?
Clau. Come, to my prison. We've been parted long,
And have but met again to part for ever!
Support me—I am faint—a sickening mist
Spreads on my swimming eyes, and closes from me
The scene of life I'm leaving.—Lead me on.

[*Exeunt.*

END OF THE FOURTH ACT.

ACT V.

SCENE I.

The Northern Headland.

Enter KATHELRADE *and* MONTALBERT.

Kath. Here ends our march: this is the Northern Headland;
And yonder lies the boat which must transport you
To Martinique.
Mont. Ere this, I trust Claudina
Has reached the cave, and waits my coming there.
Hark! there's a murmur of voices—Haply
The English force Trefusis told us of.
If I encounter them, I shall be made
Their prisoner; therefore do thou climb the rock,
And keep strict watch, while I unmoor the boat.
Kath. Gently—the lightest plashing of the oars
Betrays you.
[MONTALBERT *turns up the stage;* KATHELRADE, *going off at the side, is observed by* LOGAMAH, *as he enters.*]
Log. Who goes there?
Kath. My son, Logamah?

Log. Aye, mother! whither tend you thus betimes?

Kath. *(Aside)* I must not own my errand. *(to him).* I am here
By order of Trefusis, to await
The expected coming of the English force,
And send him instant warning.

Log. I shall spare you
That task, good mother:

[MONTALBERT *appears at the back of the stage;* KATHELRADE *motions to him to conceal himself.*]

We have laid an ambush
Which they will scarce escape.

Kath. An ambush!

Log. Aye—
Omreah has made prisoners of Trefusis
And of Montalbert's wife, and one or both
Are doom'd to die as Maloch's funeral victims;—
Whose rescue to prevent, and clear the isle
For ever from these white men, Prince Omreah
Has sent me hither, a pretended guide,
To snare their soldiers into yon morass,
Where, to a man, they perish. And, to aid
The project, I have here a ring, which we
Have wrested from Trefusis, as a voucher
That I am sent from him.

Kath. Beware, my son;
I had been well nigh robb'd of thy poor brother,
My gentle Carbal. Having rescued him,
Let me not thus, by thy too daring spirit,
Lose my Logamah too.

Log. Doubt me not, mother;
My own escape is well provided. Turn thee
Back to our tents, and let Omreah know

I'm thus far on my way. [*Exit.*

Mont. (*Coming forward.*) Thank heav'n, that yet
I may avert this mischief.

Kath. How? By warning
The English of this plot?

Mont. 'Tis the sole hope
To save my wife and friend.

Kath. I pray you, go not;
They will but make you prisoner: Trust to me;
Let me inform the English officers,
And leave you here secure.

Mont. You are unknown:
Against the strong credential of that ring,
You will not be believed. But when I greet them,
My name and character will be a pledge
That I deceive them not; and if I risk
My own captivity, I risk but little,
To save Claudina's life.

Kath. You are too eager. [*Holding him.*

Mont. Oppose me not: if I delay my purpose,
The rescue may arrive too late to serve them.
Carbal, as chief among your native priesthood,
Will have the conduct of the sacrifice:
Return, and urge him, for Trefusis' sake,
To make such hindrance of the bloody rite,
As may give time to warn the English troops,
And bring them to the rescue.

Kath. But, my son,
Logamah——

Mont. Fear not for him; I will see
To his security.

Kath. I shall obey thee:
But look thou to my son! [*Exeunt*

SCENE II.

A narrow pass between rocks; Caribs guarding it.

Enter CARBAL.

Carb. This is the pass
That leads to the North Headland; it is guarded;
But I will try the venture. Could I reach
The English force, and whisper but a word
Of these sad news, the blow might yet be stay'd.
So,—stand aside. [*To the guard.*
1*st Carib.* Omreah's word is strict,
That none may pass that way.
Carb. What recompence
Should tempt you to transgress the order?
1*st Carib.* None;
We're watch'd too strictly: Brancho goes the rounds,
To see we do our duty. He approaches—
Stand back.
Carb. You are a trusty sentinel,
And I will praise your vigilance to Omreah.

Enter BRANCHO.

Bra. All is secure. Our sentries are alert,
And no tale-bearing messenger can now

Make way, to warn the English of our purpose.
When meet we for the sacrifice?
Carb. Alas!
I fear too soon.
Bra. Thou, that so long hast borne
Our sacred garb, dost thou begin at last
To tremble at the task religion dictates?
Carb. I tremble at the task of blood, although
Religion gloss the murder.
Bra. Fantasy!
Is it not enemies' blood thou art to shed?
I'll tell thee, friend: I am no more possess'd
Than thou art, with crude appetite to kill,
For slaughter's sake; but what Omreah wills,
I hold it wise to further.
Carb. What he wills!
What grace is in his will, that it should shape
My free act with it?
Bra. Can'st thou not discern
What star is rising? He has gain'd the people,
And they have hail'd him king in Maloch's stead.
Carb. I venerate the king; but venerate heaven
Yet more.
Bra. Whose servants if we would remain,
His pleasure must be done who can uphold us.
Carb. Heaven will uphold us, if we are its servants;
If not, some other hand than mine, must do
Omreah's pleasure.
Bra. You have timely notice:
It has been still the task of our chief priest
To wield the sacred knife: and if you now
Desert this solemn use, for childish pity,

Your head may answer't, Carbal. [*Exit.*
Carb. How avoid
This dreadful office? I have held the priesthood
In the fond hope to mingle with its laws
The milder spirit of that better creed,
Which Europe's sons have taught me: but this day
Revives our foulest rites!

KATHELRADE *appears behind the pass.*

2*d Carib.* Who comes?
Kath. A friend:
Why is this streight thus guarded?
2*d Carib.* To prevent
All passage outward; you, that come this way,
May have free entrance.
[KATHELRADE *passes, and comes forward to* CARBAL.]
Kath. Hope revives! Ere this
The tidings of the intended sacrifice
Have been reported to the English force;
And if you can retard its execution
A single hour, your friends are saved.
Car. Indeed!
Kath. Within that hour the English must be here.
Car. Who is the messenger dispatched to seek them?
Kath. A zealous and a prudent one—Montalbert!
Carb. Then I will take the office which before
I had resolved to shun: I will preside
At this dire ceremonial, and contrive
Whatever may delay it.

Kath. Haste thee then,
And warn Trefusis : I will keep my watch
Around this pass, and bring you instant notice
When the expected rescue comes in sight.
[*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.

The ruins of the fort.

Enter CLAUDINA, TREFUSIS, BRANCHO, *Prisoners and Caribs.*

Clau. Frail Nature's agony is almost past :
But one short hour, and life, and pain, and sorrow,
Will cease together.
Tre. What shall comfort thee,
Claudina, best beloved ?
Clau. There is indeed
No tie to knit me with the world I leave ;
No hope that might with longer cherishing
Have budded into joy.—I have but wander'd,
As in a painful and perplexed dream,
Through a dark vale of tears ; and now at last,
Sound, quiet sleep, comes on.
Tre. Death has no sting
For thee, on whose clear mind ev'n passing thought
Ne'er cast a breath of harm.
Clau. The last sharp pang
Is past : and I am ready for my fate.

[*During the last sentence,* CARBAL *has entered, and spoken aside with* TREFUSIS.]

Tre. (*Aside to* CARBAL.) It is a hope too joyful to be trusted;
A thousand crosses may prevent them! Pr'ythee,
Let not Claudina know this chance of rescue,
Lest disappointment aggravate her doom.

Enter OMREAH.

Omr. Now, to the sacrifice—Are all things ready?

Car. All things are ready.

Omr. Lead her to the altar.
You, holy priests, to which of you belongs
The ministry of offerings to the dead?

Car. To me, as chief, that awful task pertains.

Omr. Come then, draw forth the consecrated steel;
And ye, fire-worship'd deities, that guard
This aboriginal and heav'n born race,
Give virtue to the blade, that as it draws
The heart's blood of the sacrifice, that stream
May pour a cleansing tide, and its red stain
Be on the temper'd edge for ever more,
A talisman against the pow'rs of Europe!
Lead her away! the altar waits.

Car. So soon!
Grant her a moment's time, but to prepare
For this hard doom. (*aside*) No sign of Kathelrade,
Nor of the English!

Omr. Heard you not my words?

Carb. I did—but yet—

Omr. But what? It seems I'm chosen
Your king, in name alone, and not in power,
That thus I'm disobey'd.
Carb. It is in vain,—
I cannot do it.
Omr. What device is this?
Do they conspire to mock me with a pageant?
Or have her woman's fears infected thee,
That thou dost quail to lift the lawful knife,
Thou recreant minister of indignant heav'n,
Against its foes and ours?
Carb. She's not our foe; (*to the Caribs*)
Behold her, warriors! does not the bright tint
Of that soft olive skin bespeak her rather
Our kindred?
Omr. (*to the Caribs.*) Is she not Montalbert's wife?
Friends—husbands—fathers—men!—have sixteen years
Effaced th' engrain'd remembrance from our souls,
How at their lordly feet we begg'd for mercy,
And found it not? have our faint hearts forgotten
How women knelt, and infants shriek'd in vain,
As the smear'd murderers raged from hut to hut
Amid our mountain homes, till the steep paths
Grew slippery with our blood, and bursting flames
Finish'd the havock of the unslaked sword?
Car. Yet hear—
Omr. Who loosed—who led those fiends? Montalbert!
Who sold us into bondage? rooted out
Through all the south our homes—rights—honours—rule,

And very name? wrung tribute from the north,
Tribute of brutish slavery,—till we rose
Thus in our wrath and crush'd him? Nay, look there;
Who was it, but to-night, that smote the life,
The royal life, of him whose reverend form
Lies on yon pile in stark cold death before you,
Claiming that victim due? still, still Montalbert;
That victim's husband! Let her die, then, warriors,
Ere heav'n's displeasure wing the shaft at us;
For the vext ghost of our unburied Maloch
Hovers upon us like a holy curse,
And claims this due atonement!
1st. Carib. Let her die;
Why should we brave religion's ban? if Carbal
Refuse the office, Brancho can fulfil it
With hand as holy.
Bra. What religion wills,
And the king sanctions, I will execute.
Omr. Thou art a faithful servant—take the weapon,
That nerveless arm renounces.
Tre. They arrive not;—
Each moment seems an age.
Car. Oh yet, have pity—
Look at her clasped hands, her beauteous eyes,
Streaming their silent grief—
Clau. Nay, gentle Carbal,
Thou but mak'st suit unto the flinty rock!
Omr. (*to* CARBAL.) What! thou'rt enamour'd of those lucid eyes,
That soft complexion, and the slender grace
Of that enwreathed form! Why, such a one,

My heart once loved, and must this hour
avenge!
Yes, such was once the fond wife of my bosom:
She had that tint, those eyes, that waving form;
So sweetly look'd—so passionately wept,
And called on me for help, when in my sight,
Bound as I was, Montalbert's soldiers stabb'd
her!
Such, had she 'scaped, were now my blooming
daughter,
Whom they pluck'd from me, as her little arms
Clung round my neck, imploring—Oh, those
wounds
Of years long past, still, still they rankle deep,
Still cry within me for their last relief—
Vengeance!

[KATHALRADE *rushes down the stage.*

Kath. They come, they come! Hold off your
hands!
The English are in sight upon the hill,
And we are yet in time!

Tre. It is—I see them—
The morning twilight glimmers on their arms,
And shews them to be near!

Omr. Nay then, no more
Of superstitious doubt and weak delay.
Hurry her to the altar; there are yet
Some few short moments, which shall be our own.
Priest, do thine office—thus, thus, through her
heart
We strike to his!

[*They hurry her to an altar at the back of the stage: in her struggle, she drops her necklace, which falls at Omreah's feet; she is surrounded at the back of the stage, so as not to be seen by the audience.* TRE-

FUSIS *strives in vain to break from those who hold him.* OMREAH *remains in front.*]

Omr. (continuing.) Be the blow deadly to him—
And widowed desolation, such as mine,
Lie cureless on his bosom!

Kath. No! ye dare not!—
Ye dare not do it—they are close at hand—
Th' avengers are upon you!—

Tre. Murderous outlaw!
Claudina! Sure my coward limbs grow faint,
Or I could dash these brutal slaves aside,
And force the way to succour and redress!

Omr. What, it has gall'd thee, then? Merciful heaven!
What's this? this jewel?—Stay, officious priest,
Stay your unhallow'd hands! I must speak with her
Before she dies!

Carb. (from the crowd.) Your mercy comes in vain;
She bleeds to death!

Omr. Accursed haste—
[*She is led forward, toward* TREFUSIS.

Clau. Support me
Forward. Dear friend, once more farewell!

Omr. This chain—
How and whence hadst it thou?

Clau. If in thy nature
There's any touch of pity, keep the jewels,
That if my parents live, and ever hear
My fatal story, they may know their child
Was poor Claudina.

Omr. Girl—who were thy parents?

Clau. I know not; for I was an infant yet,
When, on the first invasion of this isle,

Montalbert saved me, in the southern forest,
From a French soldier, who had raised his sword
To slay me for these gems. I'm faint!
Omr. It is,
It is—the time—the place—thy mother's voice—
Her look—her very features—'tis my daughter!
Clau. Can it be so? Am I Omreah's offspring?
Trefusis—
Tre. Monster! Heaven has turned thy rancour
On thine own head!
Omr. And is it thus the parent
Regains his long-lost child?
Clau. Farewell, my father!
Embrace me ere I die, *(She sinks to the ground. He kneels.)* and in this kiss,
Receive the last forgiveness of a heart
Whose pulse now stops for ever. [*Dies.*
Omr. Daughter, speak!
Speak to me; let me hear that voice again,
So like thy mother's!—silent still! quite dead!
My child, my child! *(Throws himself on the body.*

Enter MONTALBERT *with an English force.*

Kath. Alas! you come too late:
I cannot tell the tale—let your own eyes
Behold it there, and then be blind for ever!
Mont. What horror's here? my wife! my own Claudina!
Who has done this?
Omr. (*starting up.*) Thou, thou hast done it all—
Be that thy recompence;
[OMREAH *attempts to stab* MONTALBERT; *but the soldiers interposing, strike the blade out of its direction.* OMREAH *recovers himself instantly, and looks round him.*]
Am I outnumber'd?

Mont. Aye, and our pris'ner.
Omr. Even so? then thus
I free myself for ever. *(stabs himself)* Pardon me,
Great gods, if for a moment the weak grief
Of a fond father shook my nature's firmness!
'Tis past, and I am nerved again. Ha! ha!
Confess that I have triumph'd o'er thee, Christian!
I have redeem'd my amplest pledge of hate
Upon thy aching heart, which, now, I thank them
They would not let me pierce—since I would have thee
Still live--and bear my dying curses with thee!
(dies.)
Mont. Thou hast said truly. On my head, indeed,
Is all this load of wretchedness and guilt!
Trefusis, I am master here no more:
To you, and yours, this wasted land belongs;
And for myself, I will remain your pris'ner,
Till peace returning, give me pow'r to choose
Some monast'ry, where, in lone prayer and penance,
I may wear out the remnant of my days.
Tre. Thou'rt free, Montalbert: Carbal, raise the bodies,
And when we shall have shed our parting tears
Upon the early grave of that sweet flower,
We will again to sea, and leave the isle,
Thus by heav'n's aid delivered from our foes,
To its own heirs, the children of the soil.

THE END.

EPILOGUE,

WRITTEN BY THE HON. W. R. SPENCER.

SPOKEN BY MRS. MARDYN.

" Tis not in authors to command success,
But to deserve it,'s more."—No, no—'tis *less*.
Our authors have no selfish joy in view—
And only please themselves in pleasing you.
They deem no laurel worthy their pursuit,
Unless 'tis grafted with nutritious fruit:
One aim is theirs (though some affect to scoff it),
Call'd by the gods, Renown; by mortals—Profit.
When you with loud acclaim the bards admire,
Fame through her trumpet blows—their kitchen fire;
Making (sweet recompence of classic toil!)
At once their hearts to glow—their pots to boil!
Fame—Fame is all—and if they fail to win her,
They *may* get their *desert*—but where's their *dinner?*

But how to catch—(aye, there's the rub!)—the power
To please a taste that varies every hour?
Our elders were high-fliers from their birth,
Whilst we, *more filial,* cling to mother earth;—
All in *their* dance was caper, vault, and bound,
Whilst our *teetotum waltz* just skims the ground.
To take the air, how different are our courses—
They climb'd *balloons,*—*we* mount on—*wooden horses.*
The students now all lectures disregard,
Not for the *stable,* but the *timber*-yard.

In vain Old Bucks may vaunt their "*bits of blood,*"
Whilst every Dandy boasts "*his bit of wood.*"
In forests, not in pastures, breeders vie;
And clumps, not haras, future studs supply,
While sanguine jockies see, where'er they rove,
Saplin *Eclipses* sprout in every grove.
New terms must now old similes replace,
New sporting gibes be learnt:—at hunt, or race,
"That nag's a *stick*," what connoiseur will utter?
"Lame as a *tree*, what groom will dare to mutter?
Our cocknies now will fear no break-neck tumble,
On steeds that never start, and seldom stumble;
And hunters only one small danger find,
To break their horses' *wheels*, and not their *wind*.
Then for our *letters*—oh, the sweet invention!
And Johnson well deserves a *Palmer's* pension!
Bus'ness or Love may travel by express,
With speed far greater, and expence far less;
On wood scarce thicker than a witch's broomstick.
Laden with news, I see the *Hobby groom-stick*
Speed the soft intercourse from soul to soul,
And waft a sigh o'er England—on a pole!
Our "*wooden walls*" were long the patriot toast—
Soon, *wooden cavalry* shall be our boast;
And when some WELLINGTON to conquest leads
Our new-built squadron of—Velocipedes,
What foe will dare our prowess to withstand,
Borne on our native oak o'er sea and land!

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